

## MOTIVATION OF HUMAN CAPITAL IN THE BUSINESS ORGANIZATION

*Motivation is a competence and responsibility of the manager when managing human capital in a business organization. Motivation is based on the existence of an unsatisfied need in individuals who are the carriers of human capital and, driven by personal motives and reasoning, follow a certain behavior. By identifying and satisfying these needs, individual behavior can and should be guided by the management, in consideration with the objectives of the business organization. The ability to motivate the manifestation of human capital is the ability to manage a business organization. It is based on the specific traits and peculiarities of the human capital, on the company culture and the characteristics of the business environment.*

*JEL: M12; M51; M54*

### Introduction

A manager is responsible for the application and performance of knowledge (Drucker, 1993).

Managing a business organization means to encourage its employees to strive together to achieve the predefined organizational goals. In this sense, the “ideal” management is distinguished by its ability to guide the behavior of the people in the work process in a way that the main goals set by the executives in the organization become equally important for the employees and are achieved in a way that satisfies everybody in the organization.

Every manager would like their team members to perform their job in a manner which brings the best possible results. Therefore, the management must choose and communicate such signals, which would motivate the employees to be productive and do their job efficiently. This management practice characterizes the process of motivation and its main objective is to help the employees adopt that individual behavior, which aligns with the already established organizational strategy.

To motivate means to drive the individual behavior in the direction to achieve the goals of the organization; to encourage the individuals to work simultaneously for themselves and

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for the organization. Effective management depends on how team members are guided to achieve the established organizational strategy and what measures are being taken so that they are motivated to reach those objectives. This managerial responsibility implies stimulation of individual values, human energy and positive impulses through a system of business activities to attain both personal satisfaction and a sense of common purpose and strategy.

### **Main subjects**

In the specialized literature, the term “human capital” is defined and interpreted in different ways. In this paper the human capital in an organization is perceived as a set of traits and characteristics embodied in people (knowledge, abilities, skills, motivation) which have a certain value and are a source of future income for both – for the individuals as participants in the labor process and carriers of the human capital, and for the business organization which, under certain conditions, is using this capital.

Motivation is seen as a distinctive feature of the human capital, whose strength of impact is reflected on the manifestation of other features of the human capital in the work process. Stimulating motivation through various motivational techniques in the management mechanism depends equally on the individual characteristics of the carriers of such capital as well as on the organizational culture and its internal environment determined by the varying level of interaction, empathy, dialogue, partnership, trust and support. In this sense, creating conditions for effective management and development of human capital in the business organization is important both for the employees in it, and the management team.

Motivation as a distinctive feature of the human capital is the presence of incentive for a certain action, or inaction depending on the given situation. It is subjective and affects every individual in the workforce differently based on the signals which are sent to him from the economic, organizational and social environment perspectives in the business organization. Perceived this way, motivation precedes individual behavior in the work process and determines the activity and the extent to which employees in an organization devote their knowledge, intellectual and physical abilities, and skills.

In other words, motivation stems from the individual himself, and through the process of motivation, managers are merely encouraging and guiding it. The motivational process is a targeted individual behavior, in which a person performs certain actions with a specific goal, driven by personal motives and reasoning.

Once again, the well-known, widely discussed and difficult subject of the human nature is presented, since the motivational sphere of the individual behavior does not only depend on the human consciousness, but it is also a reflection of the human psyche.

In terms of motivation mechanism all motivational stimuli of the individual behavior are "internal". However, it is considered that motivation is determined by two groups of motivators: determined by the individual (sense of self-satisfaction, personal achievement and success, importance and responsibility) and determined by the environment (approval, recognition, promotion, remuneration).

The interaction between the two groups motivational determinants is reached as a key component of human capital management in the process of motivation, which is based on the needs, interests and goals on the one hand, and incentives and environmental factors on the other.

The human needs, interests and goals, for which the individual aspires, are at the basis of motivation. They are:

- the criterion of every individual's reaction in a particular situation – a choice of individual behavior;
- the basis for the manager to motivate a certain individual behavior.

Motivation is evoked by unsatisfied needs, which leads to a behavior aimed at satisfying them. Only needs that are not fulfilled, could be motivating for the behavior of an individual. Prerequisite for motivation are real opportunities to meet those needs adopting a certain behavior.

The process of motivation begins with identifying the unfulfilled needs. Needs are either natural instincts related to the human psyche and the biological nature as the embodiment of the internal impulse of self-preservation, or manifestations of higher forms of human intelligence and the related aspirations for self-esteem, self-realization, personal development, search for meaning. The role of the social interaction and the cultural image of the environment is significant to the form, extent and quantitative level, and less impactful to the qualitative nature of needs.

In the context of the organization, the essence of the motivational process is, after the personal needs are identified, the management should visualize a plan for their fulfillment, aligned with the organizational goals, as opposed to influencing the individual's aspirations with the goal of changing, redirecting or unifying them. Of paramount importance are both – the stimuli for the individual to do something, or the cause which leads him not to.

Motivation is dynamically changing phenomenon and motivating as part of the management process should be "adapted" to it in order to be useful and successful. Motivating as a dynamic process in the organization requires it going through all levels in the organization to be completely functional.

The goal of the motivational process is to trigger the intrinsic stimuli by achieving a direct and timely connection between the positive efforts an individual (or group of individuals) is making to meet his (their) needs and the overall achieved results. Therefore, an individual approach in this process is preferred.

However, there are certain limitations of motivating as a conscious/ deliberate process:

- The power of motivation cannot compensate for the lack of potential skills and capabilities of the individual (or group of individuals) – this means that insufficient knowledge and ability to perform a work-related task cannot be replaced by the highest degree of motivation to achieve the expected results.
- Preventing the motivation from exhaustion – this means its optimal threshold should not be surpassed as this would cause stressful effects on the individual behavior; for

example, elevated sense of biased job evaluation or a real threat of redundancy and unemployment, as well as excessive desire for success, may have burdensome impact on motivation and become the most paradoxical way towards both collective and individual failures.

Motivating means to apply equivalent stimuli to the individual's motivational values, meaning, to establish adequate synergy between the applied motivational techniques and the intrinsic values that motivate the individual. Exploring the process of motivation as an interaction of factors determined by both individuals and the environment, makes it a unique and multilayered phenomenon as a subject of scientific and applied research.

The term motivation is derived from the Latin word "movere", which means to move. In modern literature motivation is seen as a compound of psychological processes that encourage certain actions. Managers must understand these processes if they want to successfully manage their staff and encourage them to achieve the goals of the organization.

The most common model of the main interconnected components of the process of motivation include the following elements:

- identifying the lack of internal balance in the individual (needs, desires and expectations),
- defining objectives (visualizing balance),
- establishing and/ or selecting incentives (promoting balance), which leads to reducing the unbalanced satisfaction of needs,
- guiding the behavior of the individual (movement toward inner balance)

This model provides a framework for understanding the dynamic nature of the motivational process.

From the perspective of the individual, his behavior, influenced by motivation, can be interpreted as follows: after focusing on a specific need, the individual determines actions to fulfill it; the satisfied need then ceases to act as a stimulus and its place is taken by another unmet need, for the fulfilment of which another set of actions, different from the previously implemented ones, must be taken. This defines motivation, as well as the corresponding process of motivation, as dynamically changing determinants of individual behavior.

### **Motivating individual behavior**

Researches into the relationship motivation – process of motivation seek to answer questions such as: why different individuals choose the same way of behavior over another and why they continue to act in a certain manner, even when faced with difficulties and problems.

The answer to these questions is based on the understanding that motivation is very subjective – what can motivate the behavior of one individual might not affect in any way the behavior of another.

The process of motivation has been studied by several prominent economics and management schools, each of which is based on a different concept of motivation and the process of motivation of individual behavior.

Classical school (Frederick Taylor, Henry Fayol, Henry Ford) offers the so-called rational economic concept according to which the motivation of the individual is caused solely by economic needs. The representatives of this school believe that in relation to the work process, motivation is related solely to obtaining the highest possible payment, and the choice of individual behavior and the corresponding process of motivation (selection of motivational techniques) is solely based on this assumption.

This understanding of motivation is criticized by the school of human relations (Elton Mayo, Mary Follett, Oliver Sheldon, Robert Owen). According to the researches of its supporters in the field of social psychology, a human works not only for remuneration, but also to satisfy broader range of personal and social needs: communicating with others, self-realization, personal development, which complicates the choice of individual behavior and elaborates the motivation process (motivational techniques).

Another approach towards motivation presents the behavioral school of management (Douglas McGregor, Frederick Herzberg, Chris Argyris, David McClelland, Victor Vroom). It puts the accent on the ability of the leader to adapt during the motivational process. In other words, it stresses on his ability to react through an individual approach with the appropriate motivational techniques and according to the motivation of each person, bearing in mind the objectives of the organization which are influenced by multiple factors with different characteristics. On the one hand, each individual is trying to achieve important for himself goals to restore their inner balance through respective individual behavior. On the other hand, a question of managerial skill is how and to what extent individual behavior should be stimulated without harming the interests of the company, since no organization has unlimited possibilities and resources to meet all needs.

Theoretical knowledge and practical experience in the field of motivation are systematized through motivational theories, divided into content and process.

Content motivational theories (Maslow, 1943; Alderfer, 1969; Herzberg, 1968; McClelland, 1987) emphasize the subjective motivators such as instincts and needs, whose fulfilment generates goal oriented individual behavior. Process motivational theories (Vroom, 1964; Adams, 1963; Porter&Lawler, 1967; Skinner, 1938; Latham&Locke, 1979, 1990) explain how a certain behavior is formed and encouraged by the interaction of the individual with his environment, which includes the process of motivation as a management approach. Content theories are static and relatively easier to comprehend, while the process theories are dynamic and more complex to adopt. The aim of every motivational theory is to explain the choice of individual behavior and to suggest respective motivational approaches.

There are several dissimilar methods to explain individual behavior, which is explored as a reaction to the personal motivators and external stimuli through the implementation of adequate motivational techniques by the management team.

Undoubtedly, the instincts associated with the biological substance and the psyche of the individuals affect motivation. They represent an inherited or congenital predisposition to a certain behavior. Supporters of this argument believe that the choice of individual behavior is based more on unconscious motives, rather than on conscious ones, which eliminates the opportunity for serious research in this area. The theories based on instincts were criticized in the late 20s of the 20th century by scientists in the field of psychology, which in this period emerged as a science. The instinct theories gradually give way to the theories of needs – physiological, psychological, social.

According to various theories of needs, internal imbalance gives the individual behavior purpose and direction. Theorists in this area provide a better explanation of the various selection methods of individual behavior in terms of unsatisfied needs, rather than based on unrelenting instincts. In contrast to the sustainable nature of instincts, needs can change and are influenced by the characteristics of the environment. Individual behavior depends on the strength of motivation to meet these and other needs, and the stimulation of specific individual behavior suggests good knowledge of the content motivational theories by managers to implement the suitable motivational techniques.

As stated above, the process theories of motivation are more complex and difficult to implement. They are characterized by taking into account the variations of the individual's motivation as well as the conscious choice of individual behaviors influenced by the external environment. Process theories develop and support different theses on the implementation of the motivational process.

For example, according to the popular idea of the role of rewards (and punishments), the selection of individual behavior is determined not by personal instincts or needs but rather by the consequences of certain behaviors. In accordance to this statement, individuals consciously follow the behavior that has favorable outcomes and avoid behavior that has adverse consequences. It is obvious that the rewards (and punishments) can have a motivating effect, however, they are often perceived as the primary stimulus for the choice of individual behavior. Unfortunately, the role of rewards (and punishments) is validated in the practice, especially amongst staff members with lower educational and intellectual level.

Opposite theoretical idea examines the individual behavior as a result of a conscious choice between different behavioral alternatives. This choice is determined by the subjective knowledge of the individual's interaction with the surrounding environment formed by his expectations, values and other mental abilities. In practice, this statement only confirms the need for individual approach and the consideration of the employee's knowledge, skills and values when motivating his behavior.

The idea that motivation and choice of individual behavior are determined by the specifics of the individual's work has an increasingly wider application. In fact, boring and monotonous work suppresses motivation, while interesting and challenging work increases

it. When encouraging individual behavior, managers should bear in mind that the three main components of an attractive job are: diversity, independence and the opportunity to make decisions, and two popular ways to diversify routine work are enriching it and rotating the tasks the job requires.

Of course, the relation between motivation (choice of individual behavior) and the type of work should not be absolutized. The idea is that the quality of how a person performs its job does not only depend on motivation, and neither is encouraging individual behavior a sufficient factor for that, even though it is considered a necessary. Erroneous assumption leads to inaccurate management decisions regarding which appropriate motivational techniques should be implemented.

Managers could define and correct problems related to the work performance, when anticipating that poor performance is not entirely due to insufficient internal motivation or inappropriate motivating process. Awareness of this fact can lead to more honest relationship between the management team and their subordinates.

How could the management affect individual behavior in an organizational environment?

An interesting solution in this direction gives the reinforcement theory of B. F. Skinner (Skinner, 1953). It is based on the understanding that the manager can influence the formation of a certain type of individual behavior. In this theory a great importance is emphasized on the relationship between the manager and his team member, as well as on the choice of motivational techniques. They are used to encourage a certain behavior or to show that the behavior is inappropriate. Four basic techniques are used, called:

- Positive reinforcement
- Negative reinforcement
- Punishment
- Extinguishing

Positive reinforcement – providing active support to the desired behavior through feedback and a set of rewards, praise, more responsibilities at work, etc.; negative reinforcement – refraining from punishments for inappropriate behavior; punishment – active elimination of inappropriate behavior by remarks, assigning undesirable work, demotion, etc.; extinguish – passive elimination of the unwanted behaviors when the manager refrains from positive influence. The main thesis of this theory is that the more people are satisfied with the work assigned to them, the better they carry it out and the more motivated they are at work.

Modification of individual behavior is associated with the achievement of a particular behavior through systematic impact on its prerequisites and consequences. Crucial role in the formation of individual behavior is the process of motivation. Therefore, attention is directed to the selection of specific individual incentives. Once the choice is made, these incentives are arranged in a logical and understandable for the individual way. The effect of the chosen behavior depends on:

- evaluation by the individual, whether the degree of correlation between the conditions, behavior and consequences is strong or weak;

- evaluation by management team, whether it should be further encouraged or suspended depending on the achieved results.

### **Motivating through goal setting**

Individuals as carriers of human capital are the most essential part of any organization. It is their behavior and their actions that determine how to achieve organizational goals and to what extent human capital in the organization will contribute to this.

The theory of motivating by objectives was proposed by Peter Drucker (Drucker, 2010) and it is seeking the point where the organizational goals meet those of the individual. Here, the emphasis has been placed on the idea that when a person is directly involved in setting the goals, which later he seeks to achieve, a sense of commitment to working towards meeting the targets is established. There are several requirements on goal setting and how to manage their accomplishment. The goals should be difficult, but at the same time achievable. Easy targets are often underestimated and extremely difficult ones can demotivate people. Complex but achievable goals create a challenge to meet the personal need of achievements. For this purpose, a system of criteria for the evaluation of the already realized goals needs to be developed to get a more accurate information on the process of their implementation.

Edwin A. Locke (Locke, 1968) developed the theory of motivation through goal setting. He claims that individual goals and intentions are the first determinants of individual behavior.

According to the theory of goal setting the level of work performance indirectly depends on four characteristics of goals: complexity, specificity, acceptability, attractiveness. They affect both the goal itself and the efforts, which the person is willing to allocate in order to achieve it. The following patterns are typical for those characteristics: the more complex the goal, the better the achieved results; the specificity of the goal reflects its clarity, precision and certainty; acceptability of the goal reflects the extent to which individuals perceive it as his own; attractiveness expresses readiness to invest certain efforts to achieve the goal.

Logically constructed, the theory of goal setting is not easy to implement in practice as there is no single path for its execution. It does not have universal application (goal setting varies by gender, age, education, type of activity) – for example, a clear goal and its acceptability are more important for people with low levels of education and more modest skills. For people with higher education and advanced skills more important is the presence of a challenge, the opportunity to show creativity. Moreover, there is no definite answer on how and who sets the goal – an unequivocal answer on where the process of motivation should be directed and which motivational techniques are best suited, could not be given.

It is important to determine to what extent the organization and the employees in it are prepared to establish the process of goal setting, to conduct practical preparation for the introduction of the process of goal setting, to develop recommendations for further implementation of the process of goal setting.



Motivation mechanism for goal setting is based on the following assumptions:

- The goals draw attention. The meaningful goals draw the attention of the individual to what is significant and valuable for a given period of time. For example, working on a certain project focuses the individual's attention exclusively on completing the job within the set deadlines.
- The goals guide the effort. The goals do not only draw attention selectively, but also guide the efforts towards achieving them. For example, focusing on the goal compels the individual to engage with it as much as possible.
- The goals enhance consistency. In the context of goal setting, goals not only guide the efforts of individuals to perform certain tasks, but also enhance the tenacity in chasing the goal. For example, stimulating perseverance means adoption of the difficulties and the problems as a challenge to overcome, rather than as a reason to quitting.

Goals encourage the development of strategies and support planning activities by decomposing the strategies to achieve the set goals – individual and organizational.

### **Results from empirical studies**

The presented theories and research are supported by empirical studies, wherein the author participated (Milanova, Naydenova, 2014, 2015). As a result, an attempt to build a motivational profile of employees in a business organization is made. The motivational profile presents the level of satisfaction according to the influence of the main motivational techniques. Conducting studies on motivational attitudes by itself does not solve the motivational problems. It is a mean, a tool in the hands of managers for developing and implementing activities which derive from the empirical research. Based on the obtained results, directions and priorities for improving the incentive policy of the organization can be determined. However, standardized motivational program cannot be applied because developing one would require a lot of knowledge and facts about the actual status and potential of the organization. Based on the empirical studies a few indications regarding the motivational mechanism can be formulated that can be further developed and applied in managing an organization.

Empirical studies suggest the following arrangement of the most popular motivational techniques in the business practice:

Payment or financial incentive is a motivational technique placed on one of the first spots by all respondents. The paramount importance, which is given to the stimulus "monetary reward", is comprehensible in today's economic conditions, especially in our country. Money in the form of salary or other economic remuneration (bonuses, percentage of sales) is among the most exploited and obvious opportunities for motivation. Money is a factor to which hardly anyone is indifferent. But the role of money as a motivator can be called into doubt, in the sense that their absence may lead to dissatisfaction and their presence does not always lead to a complete and lasting satisfaction. This is true especially for hourly employees. They feel good when their wages are increased, but as soon as the euphoria is

worn, they focus their attention on the unsatisfied needs from the "hygiene factors according to the Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory" (Herzberg, 1968). Money, however, provides means to achieve various other things and this makes it a very powerful motivator. Since the objective of the research is to follow the motivational effect of various "external" incentives two important psychological aspects, concerning the amount of pay, should not be forgotten: first, the fairness of own salary in comparison with other wages within the business organization, and when reliable data available, compared to the wages in competing organizations; second, self-assessment of own contribution to the business organization. These are subjective, which means that individuals always appreciate their own abilities higher than their actual skills. Moreover, the higher remuneration does not always lead to higher quality. The conclusion we have is that the salary increase is a temporary effect on the individual behavior in the work environment.

The second place in the empirical studies is dedicated to the incentive "diverse and attractive job". This motivator is crucial, since when there is a lack of interest in the job itself, it becomes boring and monotonous, and the results quickly deteriorate. Tedious and dull work leads to loss of motivation and disinterested individual behavior, which in turn causes high turnover for the business organization and new job hunt for the individual.

"Recognition and trust from the management" as well as "favorable working atmosphere and collegial relationships" are ranked next as incentives. They earn a high degree of satisfaction when the business organization has considerable achievements and positive image. Loss of trust and deteriorating relationships in the team affect negatively the motivation and the behavior of the individuals.

Significant attention is paid to the possibility of further professional training and career development. This incentive is directly connected with the desire and necessity to receive higher qualification. However, the empirical studies reveal some discrepancies in the importance of this motivator for employers and employees. Career development has unexpectedly powerful motivating effect on employees. Merely changing the title of the position, while maintaining the same responsibilities, can reflect positively on motivation and individual behavior. "Elimination of duties" that are perceived annoying and time-consuming has extremely motivating effect by itself. On the other hand, 'promotion' as a result of acquiring additional qualifications and professional experience is not the favorite motivational methods for the management of a business organization, which is not a good testimonial for its managerial skills.

An important incentive for employee motivation is "improvement of the working conditions", which entails improvement of the office environment, purchasing new equipment, replacement of lighting or air conditioning system and other similar enhancements.

The empirical studies give a reason to believe that the application of appropriate motivational techniques in different combinations and in accordance with an individual approach to each employee would lead to a change in the quality of the management of human capital (improve the motivating process), synchronized with alternations in the business environment and organizational culture.

## **Conclusion and recommendations**

In conclusion, the following interesting findings stand out:

First, the change in the motivation of the individual is not an easy task. The efforts to achieve it are not always justified. Most certainly, the motivation of individuals to work and be responsible in the work process is preset, and to change it would require years of hard work, which makes the efforts aimless to a significant extent. The manager cannot change the motivation, but he can explain to his employees what results can be expected in different work environments. Maintaining a systematic personal communication between the manager and the employee aims to identify the appropriate incentives, which may lead to the stimulation of his behavior in the interest of the organization.

Secondly, it is demotivating to assign a task, which is not in accordance with the psychological profile of the individual or to assign work which fits with the psychological profile but exceeds his abilities and knowledge. This leads to confusion, despair, loss of faith in individual's own abilities and is a considerable waste of time and financial resources. Therefore, it is necessary that the manager makes an initial assessment of the skills of every new employee and assign job-related tasks, whose level of difficulty should be aligned with his or her capacity. Overwhelming expectations are not desirable – the skills of employees advance when their professional experience increases, however, this process is very slow and sometimes it requires time for a new employee to learn how to build on their own physical and intellectual capacity.

Third, a person is a psychological system of probabilistic effects and too complex an organism for his behavior to be “categorized” in defined frames. Even when the reactions of the individual are predictable, the multifaceted nature of human relationships can lead to unexpected actions. Therefore, people should be observed in their work environment and the appropriate conclusions regarding the impact of the environment on motivation and individual behavior should be drawn. In order to achieve an additional effect when applying motivational techniques is necessary to conduct experiments on regular bases and the results of those experiments should be subjected to constant analysis and evaluation.

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